



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

DID JUDAS REALLY COMMIT SUICIDE?

By J. RENDEL HARRIS,
Cambridge, England.

THE recent publication of the long-neglected and almost lost story of Aḥīkar, the grand vizier of Sennacherib, has brought to the front again the question as to the value and meaning of the traditions of the early church with regard to the death of Judas; for there are so many coincidences between the account of the death of Nadan, the nephew of Aḥīkar, and the various accounts of the death of Judas, that we seem to be led to the inference that the one catastrophe has been the model of the other, or, at least, that the method adopted by the narrators of the two stories is a conventional one, in which case the latter series of legends becomes as unhistorical as the former. When, therefore, we say that Judas is a legendary imitation of the fictitious Nadan, we mean either that the first narrator of the horrible death of Judas actually imitated the story of the end of Nadan, a legend which may be shown to have been well known in New Testament times, or that he imitated the early story, in an unconscious and indirect manner, by using the same conventional method of getting rid of the villain of his tragedy. We can see, however, that there is so much parallelism between the two characters in question, viz., the traitorous Nadan and Judas, that it is extremely probable that the imitation in question is a direct one. In any case, the value of the early Christian traditions with regard to the manner of death of the traitor is reduced almost to zero. What, then, is the parallel upon which we build such a conclusion?

For convenience, we recall the summary of the story of Aḥīkar, which is prefixed to the recent edition.¹

¹ Introduction, pp. vii-x:

"Aḥīkar, or, as he is called in Arabic, Haykar, was the vizier of Sennacherib the king of Assyria, and was famous amongst men for his wisdom in all that concerned morality and politics. But he had a standing grief, in that the wealth and power

From this it appears that the death of the traitor Nadan was expressed, when reduced to the simplest terms, in some such words as: "He swelled up, and burst asunder." We will return to this formula presently, in order to see whether there is ground for believing that the first form of the Aḥīkar legend added any further details to the two statements contained in the above formula.

And now let us turn to the Judas legends, biblical and extra-biblical. Confining ourselves, in the first instance, to the New Testament, we find that we are face to face with a harmonistic problem; for the account in Matthew is that Judas, stricken with remorse, threw down in the temple the price of blood, and then went away and hanged himself.

which he had acquired, and the wisdom which he had attained, could not be perpetuated in a son born of his own body; nor did his prayers to the gods in this regard, nor the successive marriages which he made with sixty wives, result in any male child whom he might bring up as his successor, and to whom he might teach those precepts of virtue which every sage, from his time onward to the days of Polonius, the grand vizier of Denmark, has wished to eternize by gravure thereof upon the youthful mind. At the last his reiterated appeals brought him the reply of the Supreme Power that he should take his sister's son and bring him up as his own offspring.

"The babe who is thus brought on the scene grows into man's estate, becomes tall like a cedar (though a mere bramble in heart), and is in due course introduced to King Sennacherib as the successor-designate of the now aged Aḥīkar. He is a 'goodly apple, rotten at the core.' The precepts of his uncle have scarcely penetrated the outworks of his mind, and he seems to have grown up without any taste for the proverbial philosophy which Aḥīkar had so liberally showered upon him.

"He commenced to take more than a son's place in the home, and more than a successor's right in the palace. At home he squandered and at court he intrigued. Finally a suggestion on the part of Aḥīkar to replace his wilfulness and wantonness by the superior fidelity of a younger brother brought the intrigue to a head. Nadan wrote in Aḥīkar's name treasonable letters to neighboring sovereigns, sealed them with Aḥīkar's seal of office, and then betrayed his uncle to the king. When the unfortunate victim of this intrigue is brought before the king, he is unable, through fear and surprise, to utter a word in his own defense, and as he who does not excuse himself accuses himself more effectively than his slanderers, he is promptly ordered to be done to death.

"It happens, however, that Aḥīkar had on a previous occasion saved from the wrath of his majesty, King Sennacherib, the very person who is now directed to cut off the head of Aḥīkar and throw it a hundred ells from the body. An appeal to his gratitude results in a scheme by which a substitute is found in the condemned cells at Nineveh to undergo the extreme penalty, while Aḥīkar is safely ensconced in a dark underground excavation beneath his own house, where he is secretly supplied with food, and has occasional visits of consolation from his friend the executioner. Here

Matt. 27 : 5, καὶ ῥίψας τὰ ἀργύρια εἰς τὸν ναὸν ἀνεχώρησεν καὶ ἀπελθὼν ἀπήγγατο.

His death is evidently meant to be regarded as immediately consequent upon his remorse. Along with this account we have to take the parallel one in the Acts of the Apostles, according to which Judas is said to have purchased a field with the price of blood, and to have fallen on his face and burst asunder, so that all his bowels gushed out. The passage is as follows :

Acts 1 : 18, Οὗτος μὲν οὖν ἐκθήσατο χωρίον ἐκ μισθοῦ τῆς ἀδικίας, καὶ πρηνὴς γενόμενος ἐλάκησεν μέσος, καὶ ἐξεχύθη πάντα τὰ σπλάγχνα αὐτοῦ.

And it is well known that we have in this passage a series of contradictions of the account in Matthew, which have he has the maddening experience of hearing the overhead revels of Nadan and his boon companions and the shrieks of his beaten men and maids, and occupies his loneliness by fervent petitions to the Lord for a rectification of his lot, which prayers were, if we may judge by subsequent events, more closely allied to the vindictive psalms than to the Sermon on the Mount.

"The liberation of the imprisoned vizier comes at length through political dangers in which his wise head and steady hand were needed and not found. The king of Egypt, presuming on the reports of Aḥiḳar's death, sends a series of absurd demands to Sennacherib of a type which eastern story-tellers affect, requiring answers to absurd questions and the performance of impossible requirements. *Inter alia*, he will have a castle built in the air and ropes twisted out of sand. All the while he conceals beneath these regal amenities the desire to damage the Assyrian kingdom. Aḥiḳar is now in demand : Assyria has need of him, and the prudent executioner plays the friend's part by confiding to the king that the sage is still living. The reinstatement of the buried outcast affords material for the story-teller to dilate upon, as he records how the wasted and withered old man, with nails grown like eagle's talons and hair like the shaggy fells of beasts, is brought back to his place of power.

"And here Justice might well step in and avenge on Nadan his intrigue and crime. But the moral action of the story is checked while it is related (it must be admitted that it is done too much in detail) how Aḥiḳar answered all the hard questions and evaded the absurd demands of Pharaoh of Egypt. Then, when Aḥiḳar returns enriched with gifts, and with an enhanced reputation for wisdom, and appears before Sennacherib as the savior of his country, there comes the moment when Nemesis is on the heels of Nadan, who is delivered up to his uncle that he may work his vengeance on him.

"The wretched young man is tamed by preliminary discipline of flogging, followed by black-hole and bread and water, and his uncle enriches his mind with further instruction of a very personal character and application ; and when, at the close of this preliminary treatment, Aḥiḳar is preparing the extreme penalty for Nadan, the nephew simplifies the action of the play by swelling up and bursting asunder in a melodramatic manner, which satisfies all the instincts of Justice."

rendered the incident almost the despair of those very patient and ingenious people who occupy themselves with the harmonization *inter se* of the biblical accounts; for it is not very easy to reconcile the purchase of a field by the priests with the purchase of the same field by Judas himself (however much we may strain in favor of harmony the maxim, "qui facit per alios, facit per se"); nor has it been possible, hitherto, to make a convincing demonstration of the equality of the statements "he hanged himself" and "he fell on his face and burst asunder, and all his bowels gushed out." Naturally when harmonizing became ingrained in the habit of the commentator there have not been wanting persons whose intellectual courage and sophisticated adroitness have been ready for the task of reconciling these conflicting statements. One of the simplest methods was to carry the word "hanged" over from Matthew and attach it to the account in the Acts. Traces of this violent proceeding are extant both in the texts and in the commentaries upon the Acts. Thus the Vulgate boldly reads, "Suspensus crepuit;" and, from the Vulgate, the harmonized reading acquired a great influence. For example, it appears in the version of Luther in the form: "Dieser hat erworben den Acker um den ungerechten Lohn, und sich erhängt, und ist mitten entzwei geborsten und alle seine Eingeweide ausgeschüttelt." Strauss deals quite unfairly with Luther for this rendering, in the following remark: "Luther indeed translates *πρηνὴς γενόμενος*, Acts 1:18, like *ἀπήγξατο*, Matt. 27:5, 'hanged himself,' which is clearly a mistake." We venture to say the mistake is not Luther's, but Strauss' own, for he has failed to see the Vulgate text which underlies the rendering of Luther. Nor is Jerome to be blamed for the reading, since it is one which may well have arisen, either in the Greek text or in the versions, long before his day.² We even suspect that it had already appeared, by a combination of Matthew and Acts, in the Diatessaron. For we shall find Ephrem, in his comments on the Diatessaron, discussing two

² In fact, the copy of the Acts which is read in the dispute of Augustine with Felix the Manichean actually had: "*et collum sibi alligavit et dejectus in faciem disruptus est medius.*" Blass boldly claims this harmonizing gloss as a part of the old Roman text and translates the Greek as *κατέδησεν αὐτοῦ τὸν τράχηλον*.

statements: (*a*) that Judas went off and hanged himself and died; (*b*) that his bowels gushed out, and that he fell and burst asunder.³ Even if the discussion of the conflicting statements in the sequence which we have indicated is due to Ephrem the commentator and not in the first instance to Tatian the harmonist, the only difference in the argument is that the commentator is harmonist for the nonce, and that the antiquity of the method of reconciling the accounts is well established. Accordingly we find a continuous stream of commentators who profess to have reconciled the gospel account with that in the Acts. Their method is usually, as regards the detailed explanation of what took place, to draw the inference that the rope broke, and Judas' body fell on the ground; or that someone cut the rope, when the same thing followed; or we find the story further adorned with an additional variant that the body remained hanging until decomposition set in, and that then the details given in the Acts occurred. We add instances of these methods of commenting on the text.

Ephrem gives two, if not three, interpretations. He says that "when the rope broke, he fell and burst asunder;" and then he adds that "others say that Judas shut the door and barred himself in, and no one opened the door to see what was inside, until his body was decomposed and all his bowels had gushed out." A third explanation appears to be involved in the words, "quod autem diffusus est venter ejus, eum indicat super quem stetit Judas et injecit sibi laqueum,"⁴ but I am unable to understand what Ephrem means by them.

Ephrem, then, has at least two harmonistic interpretations. Or suppose we turn to Theophylact's commentary on Matthew, where we shall find the following statement:

Some say that Judas, being covetous, supposed that he could both make money by betraying Christ, and yet Christ not be killed, but escape from the Jews as he often did escape. But when he saw him now condemned

³Ed. MÖSINGER, p. 240: "abiit et se suspendit et mortuus est . . . injecit sibi laqueum et mortuus est . . . diffusus est venter ejus . . . utque laqueus abscissus est, cecidit ille et crepuit medius."

⁴I restore Mössinger's literal footnote to the text; he himself gives "eum indicavit, qui sustentavit Judam;" in either case I suspect that there is a misunderstanding.

and judged to die, he repented because the affair had turned out other than he supposed it would. And this was why he hanged himself, in order that he might get to hades before Jesus, and there implore him and obtain salvation. You must know, however, that he actually put his neck into the noose, having hanged himself on a certain tree; but the tree bent down and he continued to live, because it was God's will either to reserve him for repentance or for open disgrace and shame. For they say that he had the dropsy, so that he could hardly pass where a carriage easily could pass; and then he fell on his face and burst asunder.⁵

Theophylact, it will be seen, is harmonizing the biblical accounts by preventing the hanging which occurs in Matthew from a fatal conclusion by the suppleness of the limb of the tree, and then reserving the released suicide for a future and more horrible death, in the description of which, as we shall see presently, he follows not only the Acts of the Apostles, but also another first-rate authority, viz., the commentary of Papias on the Logia, although Theophylact professes an acquaintance only with Luke and the Acts of the Apostles. Another explanation, which is attributed to Eusebius,⁶ is published in Matthaëi's scholia on the Acts, according to which the rope by which Judas was hanged broke, and he was not so much hurt as to die immediately, though his bowels gushed out as a consequence of his fall; but, a day or two later, he fell out of his bed and finished his life, by a further and fatal effusion of the viscera.⁷

⁵ THEOPHYLACT, *In Matt.* 27:

Τίνας δὲ λέγουσιν ὅτι ὁ Ἰούδας φιλάργυρος ὦν ὑπελάμβανε ὅτι αὐτός τε κερδήσει τὰ ἀργύρια προδοῦς Χριστὸν, καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς οὐκ ἀποκτανθήσεται ἀλλὰ διαφύγη τοὺς Ἰουδαίους, ὡς πολλάκις διέφυγε. τότε δὲ ἰδὼν αὐτὸν κατακριθέντα, καὶ ἤδη καταδικασθέντα ἀποθανεῖν, μεταμελήθη, ὡς τοῦ πράγματος ἀποβάντος παρ' ὅπερ ὑπελάμβανε. διὸ καὶ ἀπήγγεατο ἵνα προλάβῃ τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐν τῷ ᾧ ἤδη καὶ ἱκετεύσας σωτηρίας τεύχεται. Πλὴν γίνωσκε ὅτι ἔθηκε μὲν τὸν τράχηλον αὐτοῦ εἰς τὴν ἀγκύλην, ὑπὸ δένδρου τινὸς κρεμάσας ἑαυτόν· τοῦ δὲ δένδρου κλιθέντος, ἐπέζησε, τοῦ θεοῦ θέλοντος αὐτὸν ἢ εἰς μετάνοιαν συντηρηῆσαι ἢ εἰς παραδειγματισμὸν καὶ αἰσχύνην. Φασὶ γὰρ ὅτι νόσφ' ὑδερικῇ ὥστε ἔνθα ἄμαξα ῥαδίως διέρχεται, αὐτὸν μὴ δύνασθαι διελθεῖν, εἴτα πρηνὴς πεσὼν ἐλάκχησεν, ἀντὶ τοῦ διεβράγῃ, ὡς Λουκᾶς φησὶν ἐν ταῖς Πράξεσιν.

⁶ MATTHAEI, *Novum Testamentum*, Vol. II, p. 304 (Riga edition).

⁷ The scholion is as follows:

ἐλάκησε] ΕΤΣΕΒΙΟΥ. ἀπῆλθεν Ἰούδας καὶ ἀπῆρτισεν ἑαυτὸν ἐν τῷ σχοινίῳ, μετὰ τὸ ῥίψαι αὐτὸν τὰ ἀργύρια. τῆς δὲ σχοίνου κατ' οἰκονομίαν θεοῦ ῥαγείσης, εἰς γῆν ἔπεσεν, οὐκ ἀπέθανε δὲ παρ' εὐθύ, ἀλλὰ χυθέντων αὐτοῦ τῶν σπλάγχων, ἐτέθη ἐν κραββάτῳ, δύο ἡμέρας ἡμίθυτος καὶ ἀπνευστίων [Forte ἀπνευστος ὢν] ἐκ δὲ τοῦ κραββάτου ἐκπεπτωκὼς, βαγῆται μέσον καὶ τότε ἀποθανεῖν, πλείως τῶν σπλάγχων αὐτοῦ ἐξοχετευθέντων.

Again, another form of harmonistic explanation will be found in the commentary of the Syriac father 'Isho'dad on the Acts, to the following effect:

"He fell upon his face on the earth, and he burst asunder," etc. They say that when Judas hanged himself either the halter was released and he escaped, or else someone saw him hanging and saved him; and this happened by the providence of God, first that the disciples might not be accused of having hanged him, and then because it was fitting that he who had betrayed him openly should die openly. So he lived on and saw the resurrection of his Lord, and heard that he had come to his disciples many times, and that he had ascended to heaven; and then he came when many were gathered together, and fell on the ground in the midst of the city, and burst asunder, etc.⁸

All of which attempts to reconcile the gospel with the Acts find a faint echo in Bar Hebræus' remark that "it is possible that he burst asunder after he had been hanged."⁹

After reading a selection of these fantastic efforts at harmonization, one would have supposed that the reasonable mind would have recoiled from the attempt, and have been content to say that there were two different traditions, and have waited for their reconciliation until we knew something more of their origin. But this has not been the case; a continuous stream of fallacious exegesis has flowed on; nor does there seem any prospect of its intermission. Even at the end of this century it has been

⁸ The text, as follows, in a MS. in my possession:

ܐܝܬܐ ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܐ ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܐ ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܐ
ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܐ ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܐ ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܐ
ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܐ ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܐ ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܐ
ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܐ ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܐ ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܐ
ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܐ ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܐ ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܐ
ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܐ ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܐ ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܐ
ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܐ ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܐ ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܐ
ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܐ ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܐ ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܐ
ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܐ ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܐ ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܐ
ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܐ ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܐ ܕܡܝܬܐ ܕܝܗܘܕܐ

⁹ *Commentarius in Matthaeum*, edidit SPANUTH, p. 62.

reserved for a legal mind of the first order to make one more trial at the impossible task; and an English lord chancellor who, one would have supposed, would have been deterred from careless handling of the laws of evidence, has pronounced these accounts not to be incompatible. In his *Letters to His Son on the Subject of Religion* (p. 140) Lord Selborne says:

Judas, in a precipitous place (not "hanged" but) "strangled" himself (ἀπῆγγαστο); and having done so, his body might easily be found in the state described by St. Peter. Variations like these, in the circumstances of events not belonging to the main narrative, and only referred to by the way, are rather evidence of the truthfulness of writings in which no pains are taken to reconcile them, than the reverse.

The distinction between "hanging" and "strangling" is a mere subtlety; the speech is not St. Peter's, but St. Luke's; it is not true that no pains is taken to reconcile the discrepancies; nor is it a safe canon that the greater the discrepancy of two accounts, the greater is their credibility.¹⁰

But if the biblical accounts are hard to reconcile one with another, it has hitherto been supposed to be quite out of the question to reconcile either of them with the extra-biblical legends. Yet these are, as we shall see, of such high antiquity that they stand side by side, or almost so, with the gospels themselves, and cannot be condemned as the waste products of the very foolish brain of Papias. If harmonization is possible between Matthew and Acts, it ought to be possible between Matthew and Papias. But before giving these extra-biblical legends, let us take one more look at the biblical texts. It will be seen that the harmonists were so content with the edited texts of the New Testament that they barely paid attention to warnings which were uttered by great scholars and critics, who suggested that perhaps they were not in possession of the earliest forms of the biblical narrative. Casaubon had suggested that Papias, whose language we shall presently quote, had confounded

¹⁰For a still worse specimen of the perversion of reason in the interests of religion, take the following from the same work (p. 164): "The history in Genesis . . . not only may have been, but most probably was, compiled from earlier patriarchal records and traditions. . . . We consider that Adam, Seth, Noah, Shem, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph may have been, and in all probability were, the persons who preserved and recorded these earliest traditions."

two words, *πρηνής* (on his face) and *πρησθείς* (swollen); Griesbach added to his critical apparatus in the Acts the reading *πρηστῆς* s. *πρησθείς*, on the faith of a quotation from Papias in Theophylact. Grabe had unhesitatingly declared that those authors who were responsible for the tradition in Papias "must have had in their copies *πρησθείς* for *πρηνής*, which is the reading of all Greek codices and of all hitherto recovered versions."¹¹ Since their time two versions have come to light which support the suggestions of these famous scholars, for the Armenian version of the Acts (supported by the Georgian) reads that Judas "swelled up and burst asunder." And this suggests that we boldly replace *πρηνής γενόμενος* by *πρησθείς*.

A further proof of the existence of this reading in the original text of the Acts may be seen in a passage from the Armenian catena on the Acts translated by Mr. Conybeare in the *American Journal of Philology* (Vol. XVII, p. 150):

[Of Chrysostom?] Accordingly he (*i. e.*, Peter) describes also the sentence which he suffered. "*Being swollen up*," he says, "*he burst in the middle and all his bowels were poured out.*" He does well to relate, not the offense, but the punishment, in order to the comforting of those who were afraid of the Jews. But that he fell on the earth and burst and his bowels gushed out, is like this. For he shut the doors against himself before he strangled himself, and he remained there on the gibbet the Friday and the Saturday. When he had *swollen up* and grown heavy, the cord was cut by which he hung: he fell, burst asunder, and was poured out. But the stench of the putrifying heap and of his guts brought together the children of Jerusalem to come and view his infamous end, which was for him the precursor of hell-fire.

Mr. Conybeare rightly remarks that this looks like a forced harmony of the two accounts of the death of Judas. It harmonizes also two different texts of the Acts, *πρησθείς* and *πρηνής γενόμενος*. When we make this correction in the Greek of Acts 1:18 we are reading a text which is parallel to that describing the death of Nadan in the legend of Aḫiḱar; indeed, so close is the coincidence that the Armenian version of the Acts expresses the death of Judas in the very same words as the Armenian version of the legend of Aḫiḱar does the death of Nadan.

¹¹ For the references see ROUTH, *Reliquiae Sacrae*, Vol. I.

And for this reason we say that the death of Judas is modeled on the death of Nadan, and that they are both romance and not history.

And now let us take the passage of Papias from which the first suggestion came that Judas *swelled up* and died. We premise that Papias is, of all primitive writers, the one who has been most severely criticised. From the days of Eusebius until now he has suffered from violence, and the ravagers have laid waste his reputation. This is partly due to his millenarianism, which has been alternately denied and decried, but especially the latter ; partly to the fact that he puts into the mouth of our Lord and his apostles stories which have an impossible and apocryphal appearance. Yet it is certain that where Papias appears to be most absurd he often comes the nearest to a complete justification. For instance, the tale which he tells of the marvelous productive powers of grain and grape in the days of the Messianic felicity has been traced by me to a Hebrew Midrash on the "Blessing of Isaac," and by Mr. Charles to a source at least as far before Christ as the book of Enoch. We can hardly blame Papias or deride his intelligence because he happens to quote as a Dominical Oracle an interpretation which was certainly current before our Lord's time.

And it is possible that in other questions raised by the extant fragments of Papias we may equally find for him a vindication, or at least a sober explanation, of his apparent madness. And it is a good rule for criticism to say that, if Eusebius and others denounce Papias, we think nobly of Papias and in no wise approve their opinion. As a matter of fact, however, Eusebius does not always scoff at him ; sometimes he praises him very highly.

What, then, is the legend concerning the death of Judas which comes to us by way of Papias ? We have already come across a modification of it in the commentary of Theophylact who remarks that Judas suffered from dropsy, and that he could not pass down a street where a carriage could easily pass. This reference was taken from the fourth book of the Explanations of Papias on the Dominical Oracles. The simplest form in which

the quotation occurs is probably the one in which the Papias saying is imbedded in a quotation from Apollinaris of Laodicea. Cramer in his catena on Matthew presents it as follows :

Ἀπολιναρίου. Ἰστέον ὅτι ὁ Ἰούδας οὐκ ἐναπέθανε τῇ ἀγχόνῃ ἀλλὰ ἐπεβίωκε κατενεχθεὶς πρὸ τοῦ ἀποπνιγῆναι, καὶ τοῦτο δηλοῦσιν αἱ τῶν Ἀποστόλων Πράξεις, ὅτι πρηνὴς γενόμενος, ἐλάκησε καὶ τὰ ἑξῆς· τοῦτο δὲ σαφέστερον ἱστορεῖ Παπίας, ὁ Ἰωάννου τοῦ ἀποστόλου μαθητῆς, λέγων·

Μέγα ἀσεβείας ὑπόδειγμα ἐν τούτῳ τῷ κόσμῳ περιεπάτησεν ὁ Ἰούδας· πρησθεὶς γὰρ ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον τὴν σάρκα, ὥστε μὴ δύνασθαι διελθεῖν ἀμάξης ῥαδίως διερχομένης, ὑπὸ τῆς ἀμάξης πταισθέντα (l. πιεσθέντα) τὰ ἔγκατα ἐγκενωθῆναι.

The most important word for us in this extract is undoubtedly the word *πρησθεὶς*. Papias had a text which told that Judas *swelled up* and burst asunder. His business is to show how he swelled up ; one explanation is suggested in Theophylact, viz., that he suffered from the dropsy. If this explanation is due to Papias, it is a rationalizing explanation, which has substituted a gradual phenomenon for the instantaneous and theatrical one which meets us in the pages of Aḫikar. Papias is explaining that Judas went on living, and went on swelling ; he did not just swell up and die. We think that there was something in the text of Papias which answered to the *ἐπεβίωκε* of Apollinarius, for we have in the passage of Theophylact the similar term *ἐπέζησε*. The opening words of the Papias sentence about the example which Judas furnished in this world appear also to be responsible for Theophylact's

θεοῦ θέλοντος αὐτὸν . . . συντηρῆσαι . . . εἰς παραδειγματισμόν.

Thus Papias stated that God kept Judas in the world as a dread example ; for he swelled up to a terrible size, and as the result of an accident he was crushed by a passing carriage, and his bowels effused. The whole story is merely a rationalist explanation of the more simple primitive formula, "he swelled up and burst, and his bowels gushed out."

Dionysius Bar Ṣalibi has also a reference to Papias, though he does not very clearly define the limits of his translation from the Father in question. The passage, as translated by Loftus, is as follows :

Acts 1.18, *He went and hanged himself.* Matthew sayeth thus : but Luke in the Acts writes that he *burst in sunder in the midst and all his Bowels gushed out*; and both are in the Right: For there was *strangling* and *bursting* in the case, and each of the Evangelists writes of the one; for after he had cast down the Silver in the Temple, he cast a Rope about his own neck in a Wood belonging to his House; and it happening that some passing by saw him hanging, and loosed him before he was choked. Others say the Rope broke, and that for some days after he was sick, and swelled to so large dimensions as that a Cart could not bear him, and his head was sore puffed up, and his eyelids so swollen that he could not see. And Papias saith, that his privy members were mightily enlarged, and that putrid matter, abominable stench and Worms proceeded from them. Epiphanius saith, That he lived four days after his Suspension and that he was cut in twain and that his Bowels gushed out. Others that he died of that Disease, and they did not bury him, for that it was a custom to leave those unburied who hanged themselves: Wherefore he did stink and became offensive, and a nuisance to the Inhabitants round about, and they were forced to remove him thence on a Bier; when they lifted him up he fell, and bursted and all his bowels gushed out. It is said by St. Luke in the acts of the apostles, *Let his habitation be waste*: That is to say, after they had buried him, the ill savour of his house offended the inhabitants, and they removed thence the stones and the rest of the materials, and so his habitation became waste, to wit, *Scariot*,¹² and uninhabited. His house was seated in Jerusalem.

a Reconciliation of the difference between the Evangelists concerning the Death of Judas.

Epiphanius his Opinion.

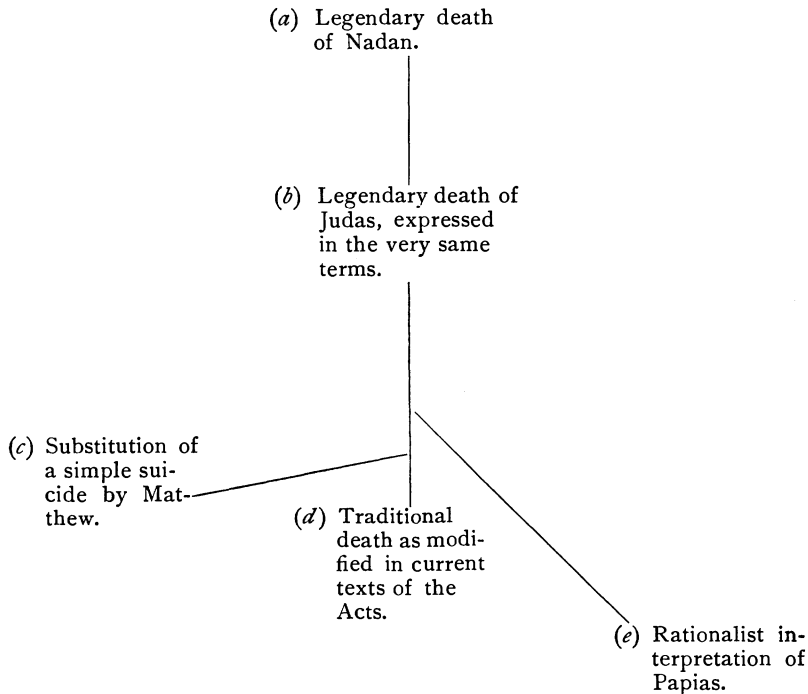
Thus Loftus, translating Bar Şalibi. The extract is important, as identifying matter from Papias; but the quotation from Papias should have been indicated earlier in the reference to the swelling up of Judas and the cart that could not carry him. Whether the quotation that is made from Papias should be carried a little farther than this is a point that needs to be inquired into.

The collection of traditions in Bar Şalibi is, in the first instance, harmonistic in tendency, but toward the end it becomes part of a prophetic gnosis with regard to the death of Judas. Between these two different kinds of commentary stands the Papias tradition which seems *to be independent both of the harmonization and of the gnosis*. It does not appear that Papias was

¹² I do not understand this, and have no copy of the original text at hand by which to test the translation.

trying to illustrate prophecy, and he certainly knows nothing of the hanging, and therefore he is not harmonizing. He is, as we have already said, rationalizing; he is trying to make more credible the statement that Judas swelled and burst, but he is unaffected by the two causes of later legendary expansion; and this form which is involved in the Papias tradition is, therefore, the fountain-head of the Judas legends, to which fountain-head Luke lies nearer than Matthew; for either the original text of the Acts actually read, "He swelled up and burst asunder," or it had what we at present read, which is an awkward and unintelligible modification of the same opinion. Matthew's version of the story is a mere substitution, with a view to get rid of the extravagance and offensiveness of the first form. We have an exact analogue in the treatment of the death of Nadan in the Aḥikar legends; the Greek forms of this story, as far as we are able to trace them, either drop the details of Nadan's death altogether, or substitute, as Matthew does, a suicide by hanging.

We may then represent the growth of the tradition somewhat as follows:



The chief business of ecclesiastical writers is to bring together again the forms (*c*) and (*d*), which we have illustrated above in a variety of ways. The explanation of Papias, also, appears to have given rise to a number of variant details, such as that (1) his head swelled; (2) his face swelled so that he could not see out of his eyes; (3) his body became dropsical; (4) other local and unmentionable swellings took place. It is characteristic of all the explanations that they are rationalistic with regard to the original swelling up and bursting asunder.¹³

It appears, then, that there is not a word of historical truth in these details of Judas' death. They all originate with the conventional story-teller. Then when the story was at last reformed, as we have it in the gospel of Matthew, a new field was opened, which is also suggested in the Acts of the Apostles, viz., the prophetic gnosis of the death of Judas. Strauss thought the whole of the story could be explained by reference to the psalms and to the story of the death of Ahitophel; thus he explained Judas' dropsy by the curse in the psalms on the traitorous friend, in the words, "Let it come into his bowels like water," and the hanging of Judas by the sentence, "Ahitophel went away and hanged himself."¹⁴ But here, as in so many cases, Strauss is too erudite for an explanation of the first form of a legend, and his explanations too highly evolved. The original account was shorter and simpler than Strauss imagined. The psalmist was not necessary to introduce the dropsy, which was already latent in the account of Judas' swelling up. With regard to the parallel that Strauss drew between Judas and Ahitophel there is something to be said; it is extremely likely that an identification of the kind was made, but it was not the starting-point of the story. But that some connection was made between Judas (in Matthew)

¹³ To take a single point, note the substitution of *ἐκκενωθήναι* for *ἐκχυθήναι*, which leads at once to the story of the carriage which crushed Judas.

¹⁴ It is fair to state that Strauss had a suspicion that dropsy was an after-development of the story, for he says: "Dropsy might be only an assumed cause of the swelling, and the latter an assumed cause of the bursting; as we read, however, in one of the psalms to which the author of the Acts of the Apostles appeals in speaking of the fate of Judas, the following words recorded against the enemy (109: 18), 'Let his cursing come into his bowels like water and like oil into his bones,' we have the dropsy . . . prefigured in the Old Testament."

and Ahitophel in Samuel is suggested by the following considerations. The Septuagint text of 2 Sam 17:23 is as follows:

καὶ Ἀχειτόφελ εἶδεν ὅτι οὐκ ἐγενήθη ἡ βουλή αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐπέσαξεν τὴν ὄνον αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀνέστη καὶ ἀπῆλθεν εἰς τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἀπήγγεστο καὶ ἀπέθανεν καὶ ἐτάφη ἐν τῷ τάφῳ [Cod. A, οἶκῳ] τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ.

The two words that are underlined are Matthew's description of the death of Judas; but already in Tatian's text, as we have seen, there was an expansion corresponding to *καὶ ἀπέθανεν*; and the later legends seem to be interpreting the expressions *εἰς τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ* and *ἐτάφη ἐν τῷ τάφῳ τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ*, for they make Judas shut himself up in his own house, and they bury him in his own field. So that we can hardly exclude the story of Ahitophel from the factors which go to explain the growth of the legend. Only it does not occupy the prominent position that Strauss assumed it to occupy in the genesis of the story.

It appears, then, that the parallel which we have drawn between the first form of the Judas legends and the story of Aḥiḱar is complete. The biblical text of the Acts is certainly in evidence for the statement that Judas swelled up and burst asunder. The Armenian version would not have altered the current text in order to make an agreement with the story of Aḥiḱar; so it only remains to be seen whether the story of Aḥiḱar shows signs of having been altered into agreement with the Acts of the Apostles.

As far as we can judge from the extant versions, the case stands thus:

The Syriac Aḥiḱar says:	Nadan swelled up like a bag and died.
The Armenian says:	Nadan swelled up and burst.
The Slavonic says:	Straightway [literally, in this hour] Anadan died.
The Arabic says:	He swelled up immediately like a bladder; his limbs swelled and his legs and his feet and his side; and he was torn and his belly burst asunder, and his entrails were scattered.
The Greek life of } Æsop which is } based on Aḥiḱar }	Ennus died not long after or Ennus hanged himself.

Comparing these expressions *inter se*, it is to be remembered that the Slavonic version betrays itself to be a translation

from Syriac, for it opens with a literal rendering of the Syriac expression which means *straightway*. So the Slavonic and its underlying Greek are convicted of omitting the detail of the swelling of Nadan. With this agrees the evidence of the Greek Æsop. But if these are thus shown to be secondary witnesses, the oriental versions, which remain to be considered, are in agreement for the "swelling up" of Nadan, which is thus shown to be a part of the primitive account. The Armenian Aḥiḳar has not taken it from the Armenian Bible, but from a previously existing Syriac text of Aḥiḳar. And, further, the concurrence of the Armenian and Arabic versions in the statement that "Nadan burst asunder" enables us to carry that statement also back into the Syriac from whence they are derived. Whether more than these two statements goes back into the first form of the legend is not so clear; we suspect, however, that it also contained a statement that "his bowels gushed out." In that case the parallel with the Acts of the Apostles would be complete. In any case it is sufficiently shown that one of these stories is the literary parent of the other.

In the foregoing statement of the growth of the Judas legends we have hazarded the conjecture that the account in Papias is not characterized by an adaptation of prophecy to the purposes of tradition. But this assumed freedom from prophetic gnosis is a point that requires to be looked into a little more carefully, (1) because it is certain that such gnosis does play an immense part in the evolution of the Judas legends, (2) because Papias has been credited with some of the most highly evolved factors of the traditional enhancement of the tale of the traitor's death.

We have shown that, from a literary point of view, it is the swelling that is responsible for the dropsy and not the dropsy for the swelling. In the same way the swelling of Judas harped upon and reiterated might be the cause of his puffed head and enlarged eyelids, and consequent loss of sight. Still we ought to ask the question whether Strauss may not be right in deducing this blindness, in part at least, from Ps. 69: 23: "Let their eyes be darkened that they see not."

In the same line of thought it ought to be admitted that the prayer in Ps. 69:25, "Let their habitation be desolate and let none dwell in their tents," a passage which is actually quoted in Acts 1:20 in the discourse on Judas, must be the reason for the embellishment of the later legends with regard to the desertion of Judas' house. Thus we find in Œcumenius, as in Apollinarius and in Bar Ṣalibi, "Judas died in his own farmhouse, and that, from the foul smell attaching to the place, it has *remained deserted and unoccupied* until the present day." The same passage gives the story of the swollen eyelids of the traitor. We must allow, then, for some influence of prophetic gnosis in the evolution of the legends.

But does this stage reach back as far as Papias? That depends upon whether the matters referred to are quoted in the Œcumenius commentary from Papias, or whether they are later expansions. It is universally agreed that Papias is responsible for the swelling and bursting of Judas, and the passing wagon. But the catenæ and commentaries from which our information comes go farther than this; thus we have in those catenæ which give the extract from Papias, through the intermediary of Apollinarius, a suggestion that the account does not stop with the incident of the wagon. The extracts printed by Cramer vary, according as they are taken from the commentaries on the gospels or the Acts; for convenience we place them side by side:

CRAMER: *Catena in Matthaeum*, 27.

Ἀπολιναρίου. Ἰστέον ὅτι ὁ Ἰούδας οὐκ ἐναπέθανε τῇ ἀγχόνῃ, ἀλλ' ἐπεβίωκε κατενεχθεὶς πρὸ τοῦ ἀποπνιγῆναι, καὶ τοῦτο δηλοῦσιν αἱ τῶν Ἀποστόλων Πράξεις, ὅτι πρηνὴς γενόμενος, ἐλάκησε καὶ τὰ ἐξῆς· τοῦτο δὲ σαφέστερον ἱστορεῖ Παπίας, ὁ Ἰωάννου τοῦ ἀποστόλου μαθήτης, λέγων· Μέγα ἀσεβείας ὑπόδειγμα ἐν τούτῳ τῷ κόσμῳ περιεπάτησεν ὁ Ἰούδας· πρηνθεὶς γὰρ ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον τὴν σάρκα, ὥστε μὴ δύνασθαι διελθεῖν ἀμάξης ῥαδίως διερχομένης, ὑπὸ

CRAMER: *Catena in Acta*, 1.

Ἀπολιναρίου]. Οὐκ ἐναπέθανε τῇ ἀγχόνῃ Ἰούδας, ἀλλ' ἐπεβίω καθαιρεθεὶς πρὸ τοῦ ἀποπνιγῆναι· καὶ τοῦτο δηλοῦσιν αἱ τῶν Ἀποστόλων Πράξεις, ὅτι πρηνὴς γενόμενος ἐλάκησε μέσος, καὶ ἐξεχύθη τὰ σπλάγχνα αὐτοῦ. τοῦτο δὲ σαφέστερον ἱστορεῖ Παπίας ὁ Ἰωάννου μαθήτης, λέγων οὕτως, ἐν τῷ δ' τῆς ἐξηγήσεως τῶν Κυριακῶν λόγων· μετὰ δὲ ἀσεβείας ὑπόδειγμα ἐν τούτῳ τῷ κόσμῳ περιεπάτησεν ὁ Ἰούδας· πρηνθεὶς ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον τὴν σάρκα, ὥστε μὴ

τῆς ἀμάξης πταισθέντα τὰ ἔγκατα ἐγκενωθῆναι.

τοῦ αὐτοῦ. Πρῆσθεις ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον τὴν σάρκα ὥστε οὐδὲ ὀπόθεν ἄμαξαν ῥαδίως διέρχεσθαι, ἐκείνον δύνασθαι διελθεῖν, ἀλλὰ μηδὲν αὐτὸν μόνον τὸν τῆς κεφαλῆς ὄγκον· τὰ μὲν γὰρ βλέφαρα αὐτοῦ τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν φασὶ τοσοῦτον ἐξοιδῆσαι, ὡς αὐτὸν μὲν καθόλου τὸ φῶς μὴ βλέπειν, τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς δὲ αὐτοῦ μηδὲ ὑπὸ ἱατρικῆς διόπτρας ὀφθῆναι δύνασθαι, τοσοῦτον βάθος εἶχον ἀπὸ τῆς ἔξωθεν ἐπιφανείας· τὸ δὲ αἰδοῖον αὐτοῦ, πάσης μὲν αἰσχύνης ἀηδέστερον καὶ μείζον φαίνεσθαι, φέρεσθαι δὲ δι' αὐτοῦ τοὺς ἐξ ἁπαντος τοῦ σώματος συρρέοντας ἰχώρας, καὶ σκώληκας, εἰς ὕβριν δι' αὐτῶν μόνον τῶν ἀναγκαίων. μετὰ δὲ πολλὰς βασάνους καὶ τιμωρίας ἐν ἰδίῳ φασὶ χωρίῳ τελευτήσαντος, ἀπὸ τῆς ὀσμῆς ἔρημόν τε καὶ δοικὸν τοῦτο τὸ χωρίον μέχρι τῆς νῦν γενέσθαι, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ μέχρι σήμερον δύνασθαι τινα ἐκείνον τὸν τόπον παρελθεῖν, ἐὰν μὴ τὰς ῥίνας ταῖς χερσὶ ἐπιφράξῃ.

δὲ ὀπόθεν ἄμαξα διέρχεται ῥαδίως ἐκείνον δύνασθαι διελθεῖν· ἀλλὰ μὴ δὲ αὐτὸν τὸν τῆς κεφαλῆς ὄγκον αὐτοῦ· τὰ μὲν γὰρ βλέφαρα τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν αὐτοῦ φασὶ τοσοῦτον ἐξοιδῆσαι, ὡς αὐτὸν μὲν καθόλου τὸ φῶς μὴ βλέπειν· τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς δὲ αὐτοῦ μὴ δὲ ὑπὸ ἱατροῦ διόπτρας ὀφθῆναι δύνασθαι· τοσοῦτον βάθος εἶχον ἀπὸ τῆς ἔξωθεν ἐπιφανείας.¹⁵ τὸ δὲ αἰδοῖον αὐτοῦ πάσης μὲν ἀσχημοσύνης ἀηδέστερον καὶ μείζον φαίνεσθαι· φέρεσθαι δὲ δι' αὐτοῦ ἐκ παντὸς τοῦ σώματος συρρέοντας ἰχώρας τε καὶ σκώληκας εἰς ὕβριν· δι' αὐτῶν μόνον τῶν ἀναγκαίων· μετὰ πολλὰς δὲ βασάνους καὶ τιμωρίας, ἐν ἰδίῳ φασὶ χωρίῳ τελευτήσαντα· καὶ τοῦτο ἀπὸ τῆς ὀδοῦ [? ὁδμῆς] ἔρημον καὶ δοικητὸν τὸ χωρίον μέχρι τῆς νῦν γενέσθαι· ἀλλ' οὐδὲ μέχρι τῆς σήμερον δύνασθαι τινα ἐκείνον τὸν τόπον παρελθεῖν, ἐὰν μὴ τὰς ῥίνας ταῖς χερσὶ ἐπιφράξῃ· τοσαύτη διὰ τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς κρίσις ἐχώρησεν·

These two extracts are clearly from the same source, and from them depends the comment of Œcumenius. But in this latter comment we find the same sharp division between the two parts of the extract as in the catena on Matthew. Where the catena has τοῦ αὐτοῦ, Œcumenius has ἄλλως. We should, then, naturally assume that this is the expansion which Apollinarius, or some writer intermediate between himself and Papias, has made on Papias. Against this it may be urged that Bar Ṣalibi appears to refer the latter portion rather than the former to Papias, but this may be only an error introduced by Bar Ṣalibi in working over the matter of the catena. On the whole it seems more likely that Papias has furnished suggestions for the

¹⁵ Desunt hic quaedam quae supplevimus ex optimo cod. Coislin, xxv.

embellishment of the Judas legends, which other writers have not been slow to take up and expand.

We will now hazard a conjecture as to the meaning of the reading *πρηνὴς ἐγένετο* which has been substituted, in our copies of the Acts, for a primitive *πρὸςθεὸς*. We suspect that it arose out of an attempt to identify Judas with a poisonous snake, and in particular to make him the fulfilment of the prophecy, "On thy belly shalt thou go," made to the serpent in the third chapter of Genesis. Closely connected with this passage in the minds of the interpreters is one in the Blessing of Jacob, where it is said of Dan that he shall be "a serpent in the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse's heels, so that his rider shall fall backward."

We will begin the identification by establishing the tradition that Judas was the serpent of the tribe of Dan.

In the *Book of the Bee*, by Solomon of Bassora,¹⁶ we are told that "Judas Iscariot, the betrayer, was from the town of *Sēkharyūt*, of the tribe of Gad, *though some say that he was of the tribe of Dan. He was like unto the serpent* that acts deceitfully toward its master,"¹⁷ because, like a serpent, he dealt craftily with his Lord."

The same identification underlies the commentary of Procopius on the blessing of Jacob; he begins by saying that some people understand Dan to be the devil, who does not cease to lie in wait for the saints. He continues with the statement that *Judas Iscariot was of the tribe of Dan*, and the devil entered into him. *Judas was the serpent in the way*, for he professed to be in the way of righteousness, and yet attacked the heels of the horse, *i. e.*, the flesh of Christ. The identification of Judas with the serpent of Dan is here to be conceded. He then goes on to say that Dan also stands for the people that persecute the saints, which people are like the serpent biting the horse's heels, *i. e.*, inflicting severe and painful bites. For "he shall watch thy head and thou shalt watch his heel" (according to the reading of the LXX in Gen. 3:15). Here the connection is established between the serpent of the third chapter of Genesis and the serpent in the blessing of Jacob.

¹⁶ Edited by BUDGE, p. 107.

¹⁷ Query: *toward the rider?*

This identification of Judas with the serpent is involved also in the Acts of Thomas, where Judas Thomas heals a young man who has been bitten by a black snake. Judas Thomas makes the snake tell his history and why he killed the young man. The snake says :

I am the kinsman of him who spake with Eve, and through her made Adam transgress the commandment of God I am he who caused Judas to take the bribe, when he was made subject to me, that he might deliver up the Messiah to death I am the kinsman of him who is to come from the east, to whom the power is given.

That is to say, the snake is the serpent of the Garden of Eden the devil that entered into Judas and the Antichrist who, according to early belief, was to come from the tribe of Dan.

Judas Thomas orders the snake to suck out his poison from the body of his victim. What follows? The snake *began to swell*; and when he had drawn out the whole of the poison, *the snake burst*. "And a great pit was made in the place where the poison of the snake fell. And Judas commanded the king and his brother to fill up that place, and lay foundations, and make in it houses as places of entertainment for strangers." This last detail is borrowed from the story of the death of Judas in the gospel, the place of his death being purchased as a place to bury strangers in.¹⁸ Here, then, we have the idea of Judas as the poisonous snake clearly enunciated.¹⁹

May we not, then, say that it is established that there was a tradition which identified Judas with a poisonous serpent? And if this be so, is not the expression *πρηνῆς γενόμενος* an attempt to illustrate the curse upon the serpent at the beginning, "On thy belly thou shalt go" ?²⁰

¹⁸ And it is involved in this proved parallel between the snake and Judas Iscariot that Judas also "swelled up and burst" in the view of the author of the legend.

¹⁹ We have assumed a connection between the language of the *Acta Thomae* (places of entertainment for strangers) and the expression in Matthew (a place to bury strangers in); it may, however, be urged that these two expressions are two separate attempts at a prophetic gnosis on Ps. 109 : 11, "Let strangers make spoil of his labor." If this were the case, the connection of the expression in the *Acta* with Judas is made through the psalm, which has been treated as a prediction of the betrayal. But the explanation given above is the more natural.

²⁰ It will be seen that we entirely reject the interpretation which renders *πρηνῆς γενόμενος* by "falling headlong." And certainly the harmonist could not make a hanging body fall headlong by cutting the rope by which it hung.

But whether this be the right explanation of the introduction of the words *πρηγῆς γενόμενος*, or whether we prefer to explain the reading as an arbitrary correction, made independently of the traditions attaching to the subject, enough has been said to show how unhistorical the whole of the legends are that profess to relate the death of Judas.

The tradition which connects Judas Iscariot and the poisonous snake that swells and bursts is a wide-spread piece of ecclesiastical folk-lore. I have found a trace of it in Ireland, from whose happy shores St. Patrick is said to have banished at one stroke all the poisonous serpents and all the devils. On this expulsion Giraldus Cambrensis, as quoted by Holinshed in his *Chronicle*, remarks that

Certain merchants affirme, that when they had unladen their ships, in Ireland, they found by hap some toads under their balast. And they had no sooner cast them on the shore, than *they would puffe and swell unmeasurably*, and shortlie after, turning up their bellies, *they would burst in sunder*.

Here we have the venomous beast that swells and bursts. But where shall we find a trace of the connection between such poisonous creatures and the traitor? Commenting on the passage in Holinshed, Mr. W. R. Le Fanu says in his *Seventy Years of Irish Life* (p. 119):

There are still in Ireland two small creatures which the saint might as well have abolished when his hand was in, as they are, or certainly were in my early days, held in great abhorrence by the peasantry in the south of Ireland. One is a small brown lizard . . . the other is a long, ugly-looking beetle, black and shiny . . . I do not think they had any English name for the [latter] beast, which they called a *darraghdeoul* (red devil). The tradition as to him was that he had, in some form or way, guided or accompanied Judas Iscariot to the garden of Gethsemane, the night of our Lord's betrayal.

Here we have a modern survival of the primitive belief that Satan entered into Judas in the form of a black snake.

In the *Revue biblique* for January, 1899, M. Cosquin has worked out in a very convincing way the analysis of the folk-lore elements in the two related stories of Aḥikar and Tobit, and, having thus destroyed the historicity of Tobit, he makes a feeble attempt to defend its canonicity, which is sheltered by the council of Trent, on the plea that canonicity does not imply

anything more than a moral intention. It is a method of reasoning which would allow the inclusion of the whole of *Æsop's* fables in the canon. He draws, however, a distinction between the book of Tobit and the rest of the Bible, on the ground that there is no common matter between Tobit and the other books.²¹

One has only to read the two books of Tobit and *Aḥikar* side by side with the Old and New Testaments to find that the parallels are so frequent between the two admittedly "folk-lore" books and the Bible generally that we cannot draw the line in the way which M. Cosquin suggests. He did not know when he wrote that there was such strong evidence for connecting the death of Judas Iscariot with the death of Nadan, and that the explanation "canonical, but not historical" will apply equally well to the folk-lore elements in the story of Judas. If he wishes to say that this story is a romance with a moral intention, he may obtain our assent at the expense of our faith in the documents; but to apply an apologetic method of this kind to the New Testament is to introduce a critical factor that is disturbing to something more than the decrees of councils. Clearly we shall have to reinterpret the New Testament, with allowance for possible folk-lore throughout. Nor is it even certain that all the cases that may turn up will show a moral intention as the kernel of the non-historical incident.

Perhaps it may be urged that the passage in the Acts which describes the death of Judas is an evident interpolation of a very early period, and that the real account is the brief and unadorned one in Matthew. I do not think this hypothesis will bear investigation, but it might be worth a little further examination. I suspect the person who engages in it will soon desist, and accept the simpler solution that not everything which passes for history in the East is necessarily true, even if it be canonized.

²¹ P. 80: Le corps même de l'histoire de Tobie, et non pas seulement les personnages secondaires qui y auraient été introduits (*Aḥikar* et Nadan), peut être rattaché à tel thème de contes populaires. Mais qu'importe ? Dans un ouvrage à but moral, dans une parabole développée, laquelle est d'ailleurs tout à fait indépendante du reste de la Bible, tout à fait hors d'œuvre, l'auteur prend son bien où il le trouve, et il lui est permis de faire sien, en l'adaptant à son dessein, même une œuvre profane, même une œuvre païenne.

But if this dramatic method of getting rid of a bad man which we find in Ahiḳar and the Acts be the popular one for an eastern story-teller, why should we limit our inquiry to the Acts of the Apostles, or to Judas and Nadan? There are plenty more villains in the play that have to be got rid of. What shall we say of Josephus' account of Herod the Great?

I may as well say frankly that I believe Josephus' account of the horrible death of Herod is largely mythical, and that there underlies it a death in the proper folk-lore manner. That he swelled up and burst was part of the story, and this has been worked out either by Josephus or his sources, so as to disguise the simpler and more naïve story-telling. Dropsy is one of the features that Josephus expressly dwells on, so that his limbs and his belly swelled up, or, as Josephus elegantly puts it, "an aqueous and transparent liquor had settled itself about his feet, and a like matter afflicted him at the bottom of his belly" (*Antiq.*, XVII, 6, 5). There is not the least reason to suppose that Josephus, writing so long after Herod's death, had any trustworthy account of the symptoms which he has been so praised for describing. He was rationalizing in his own historical manner, just as Papias does in his. If one wants to get nearer to the origin of the story, we should look and see the form which the tale takes when it gets into Syrian hands. I do not know whether Solomon of Bassora in his *Book of the Bee* is limited to Josephus for his account of the death of Herod, but, if so, he has understood Josephus exactly in the sense in which we have taken him; and if he is not limited to Josephus, he has access to another line of tradition which confirms what we have been saying of the right way to read Josephus. For he tells us²² that "Herod's bowels and his legs were swollen with running sores, and he was consumed by worms, . . . he cut his throat with his own hand, and his belly burst open, and he died and went to perdition."

It is very like the story of the death of Nadan in the Arabic version, nor are there wanting other parallels (which the reader can work out for himself) between the Josephus legend and Papias' account of the death of Judas.

²² P. 88.

It appears, then, that all matter of this kind is pseudo-historical, and requires to be treated with extreme caution. The historical nucleus, if one exists, is for the most part microscopically small. Nor is it safe for the historian to make an idol out of either Josephus or St. Luke.

P. S.—This article was sent to press before M. Cosquin's second article on the Tobit-Aḥikar problems appeared in the *Revue biblique* for October 1, 1899. We have anticipated in the previous pages most of the points which M. Cosquin makes against our textual criticism. M. Cosquin thinks the evidence of the Greek MSS. and the old Latin sufficient to establish the reading *πρηνὴς γενόμενος* in the Acts. If the Armenian version reads *πρηνεὶς*, this must be a blunder of the translator. But, as we have shown, the traces of this reading are found, not only in a badly translated (?) Armenian version, but in Georgian, in Syriac, and (as the Papias legends show) in Greek. It is too late in the day to assume the consensus of Greek and Latin MSS. to be the reading of the original text.

Of other matters discussed by M. Cosquin the limits of our space prevent our speaking at present.